



## Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

Meeting of the Board of Directors

AIPC Conference Room, 437 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840

Minutes for Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 06:00 PM

### Board Members (Bold indicates present):

#### *Newport*

**Hilary Stevens, Chair**

**Peter Janaros, Vice Chair**

John DiBari

Dean Workman

#### *Middletown*

**Linda Finn**

**Richard Adams**

**Diana Skaggs**

**Gladys Lavine**

#### *Portsmouth*

**Anne Macedonio**

Ray Berberick

**Gary Gump**

Kathleen Wilson

**Ex Officio:** Erin Donovan-Boyle, Newport County Chamber of Commerce

### Municipal Liaisons (Bold indicates present):

#### **Rick Lombardi**

Middletown Town Council

#### **Marco Camacho**

Newport City Council

#### Keith Hamilton

Portsmouth Town Council

### Staff (Bold indicates present):

**Thomas Ardito, Exec.**

**Director**

**Allison McNally, Office & Project**

**Manager**

**George Johnson,**

**Planner**

### **Welcome and Approval of Agenda**

A quorum being present, Hilary Stevens, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. The agenda was unanimously approved.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of January 19, 2016 were unanimously approved.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Tabled

### **Strategic Planning Report**

Tabled

### **Executive Directors' Report**

Document Distribution. Tom Ardito indicated a "Dropbox" has been established to make documents of interest available to Board members.

Expenditure Policy and Process. The Executive Committee presented a proposed procurement policy to the Board. The policy specified:

- For expenditures under \$1000, the ED has complete discretion.
- For all expenditures over \$1000, the ED should gather quotes/bids from at least three vendors before making a decision. The ED is encouraged to circulate a Request for Proposals whenever s/he feels it is appropriate.
- For expenditures between \$1000 and \$5000, the ED may proceed based on bids and other relevant factors.
- For expenditures between \$5000 and \$10,000, the ED should seek approval from the Executive Committee.
- For expenditures over \$10,000, approval from the full board is necessary.



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Linda Finn moved to approve the expenditure policy outlined above. The motion was duly seconded and unanimously approved.

Anne Macedonio raised a question about geographic preferences on RFP's. After discussion, Tom Ardito agreed to draft language to modify the purchasing policy, in order to reflect AIPC's preference for awarding contracts and other funding agreements to local organizations.

The Board agreed that two signatures should be required for expenditures. Tom will work with Allison and the Finance Committee to establish an efficient sign-off process.

Director of Communications and Fund Raising. Tom reported that there has been a good response to the RFP and position hiring announcement. The closing date for the RFP is Friday February 19th. The closing date for position applications is Friday February 26th. Proposal reviewers are needed. The best three proposals and candidates will be recommended to the Board for final selection.

Public Forums. The Board discussed future public forums planned in partnership with the Newport Daily News and the Pell Center at Salve Regina University. A general discussion followed with a variety of topics, locations & venues, potential partners, and guest speakers suggested. Tom and Allison and the new AIPC Director of Communications will pursue establishing a regular AIPC sponsored Public Square Series in partnership with other organizations and institutions. It was noted that there are currently a variety of ongoing speaker series. The Edward King House Center, Newport Art Museum, Redwood Library, Pell Center, and Naval War College all offer speakers and subjects of interest. Gladys Lavine, Linda Finn and Dick Adams volunteered to assist the AIPC staff with developing the public forums.

Building Status – 437 Broadway. Tom reported that the current location was untenable. Despite the best efforts of the Newport Public Works Department, dealing with a leaking roof, frozen pipes, heat, electrical and other problems is consuming too much staff time and attention. The City of Newport is now in the process of placing the property on the market. A memorandum was distributed defining office space needs and alternatives. A general discussion was held of facility costs, potential locations and space needs. Tom indicated that he expected to occupy new office spaces by April 1st. A move to short term office space in the Chamber of Commerce building or other location may be required. The Board approved by consensus a motion authorizing Tom to contract for short term office space with approval of the Executive Committee. Full Board approval will be required for long term facilities. Peter Janaros offered to assist staff in structural review of potential office space.

2016 Meetings schedule. The schedule was distributed and is attached.

The Board voted to adjourn at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: /s/ Richard Adams

Attachments:

Executive Director Memorandum on Public Forums

Executive Director Memorandum on AIPC Office Space

2016 Board Meeting Schedule



**Memorandum**

**To:** AIPC Board, Reps & Advisors

**From:** Tom Ardito, Executive Director

**Date:** 30 January 2015

**Subject:** Forums in Partnership with Newport Daily News

The Newport County Legislative Forum, cosponsored by AIPC, the Newport Daily News, and the Pell Center on January 13, was a great success. All three partners are interested in sponsoring future events. This memo summarizes information and discussions to date in order to inform the Board's discussion on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Impact:** The event was featured on the front page of the Daily News, and significantly raised AIPC's profile among the Newport County delegation, municipal officials and the public. Eight of Newport County's 11 state legislators participated, and audience registration was full at 100. The event was attended by elected officials and staff from all three Island municipalities.

**Cost:** The Daily News contributed advertising, videography costs, and the moderator. The Pell Center provided the venue and split the costs of catering with AIPC. Cash cost to AIPC was therefore less than \$500. The first forum took approximately 20 hours of Allison's time and 10 hours of mine. Future events will naturally require less time to organize and can be done by the new Development & Communications Manager.

**Thoughts on Future Forums:** We would like to sponsor these kinds of events more or less quarterly, in order to maintain an ongoing conversation about issues of importance to Aquidneck Island. Future events should be held in all three Island communities. Potential topics include transportation, demographics, sustainability, technology and economic development.

We'd like to do a forum in Spring, 2016 on "Aging on Aquidneck Island," to discuss the impacts of the Island's aging demographics, including implications for housing, transportation and healthcare.

Next year, running from the Fall through the Spring of 2016-7, we'd like to do a "Smart Island Series" to explore opportunities and challenges for the future of Aquidneck Island. Topics in the series may include transportation, renewable energy, broadband, storm preparedness, water quality, economics, etc.



**Memorandum**

**To:** AIPC Board, Reps & Advisors

**From:** Tom Ardito, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Tom Ardito", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Date:** 17 February 2016

**Subject:** AIPC Office Space

As you probably know by now, the problems with AIPC's current offices at 437 Broadway have recently become significant. This memo summarizes the current status of the building; plans for next steps; and options for new facilities.

**Status of 437 Broadway:** Over the past week, our problems with the building at 437 Broadway have taken a turn for the worse. All winter, a failing roof has caused standing water on the second and third floors, leading to frequent leaks to the first floor. As a result, we have had to shut off the power to parts of the first floor. Over the period Feb. 13-16, several pipes burst in the cellar, causing a flood on the first floor.

The City is deciding whether to repair the roof. In any event the property is expected to go on the open market in about a month. Too much of Allison's and my time have been spent dealing with the problems of the building, and with the continuing dampness, mold and mildew have the potential to become a health concern. 437 Broadway is no longer a safe and practical working environment for AIPC. We should seek to secure better office space as soon as is practicable.

**Cost & Budget:** The City of Newport made 437 Broadway available to AIPC at virtually no cost; however we are responsible for heat and electricity, which we share with Bike Newport. In 2015, AIPC's average cost for operating 437 Broadway was approx. \$800 per month, including internet and phones. For 2016, we have budgeted \$1000 per month for all facilities costs.

**AIPC Space Needs:** In the near term, AIPC needs at minimum 200-300 square feet of working space, with phones and internet, for 3-4 full time staff, anywhere on Aquidneck Island. If our primary space is not suitable for public meetings, these can be held in libraries or town halls. As a permanent home, we would ideally have 1000 – 2000 s.f. with conference space, suitable for 5-6 full time staff.

**Options:** Given the urgency of our situation, we are considering both short-term and long-term solutions. We may need to relocate to temporary space until we find a longer-term home. For the medium to long term, we are exploring the possibility of developing a co-working space with

shared services for a number of Island non-profit organizations. Through our strategic planning process, we will discuss this idea as a program element of AIPC's work.

**Schedule:** We are working to identify at least a near-term home for AIPC by February 28<sup>th</sup>, with the goal of moving into new offices on April 1.

**Projected Moving Costs:**

- 8 yard dumpster: \$300
- Moving assistance (1 day with truck): \$200-300
- Storage unit (if needed): \$80-\$150 per month, short term only
- Total \$600-\$1200

**Potential Locations:**

**Newport County Chamber of Commerce:** 2 adjacent offices, 100 s.f. each, \$400 each with utilities. Small but good short-term or emergency solution; includes conference space; available immediately.

**Florence Gray Center:** Under discussion with Newport County Boys and Girls Club. Good potential for near term office and longer term co-working space. Cost not yet established – probably around \$14/s.f./year for about 300 s.f., or about \$400-500 per month. Good parking; location in underserved community; handicapped accessible.

**United Congregational Church Parish House:** Under discussion with La Farge Restoration Fund. Good potential for short-term location and for longer-term co-working space.

**Commercial Rentals:** We are looking into several potential spaces:

- Bellevue Avenue: 575 s.f., \$900 + utilities
- 494 Broadway, small office, \$400
- 136 West Main Road, cost not yet established.

**Newport Hospital:** We have inquired about unused office space belonging to Newport Hospital, in a converted house off Broadway.

**Municipal properties:**

- Portsmouth: Nothing available immediately; potential space in former school administration building or Coggeshall School in the future.
- Middletown: TBD.
- Newport: Initial inquiry suggested nothing available; we will continue exploring.

**Other possibilities:**

- Maher Center – need to inquire with Newport Housing Authority.
- Middletown Grange – not a near-term solution, but could be a good long-term location for shared nonprofit space. Need to inquire with Middletown.



## **AIPC Board of Directors Meeting Calendar 2016**

*All Meetings at AIPC Offices, 437 Broadway, Newport, unless otherwise indicated*

*All meetings on Tuesday unless otherwise indicated*

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month except for August unless exceptional circumstances require rescheduling.

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

### **Meeting Calendar**

- January 19
- February 9
- March 8
- April 12 – Middletown Town Hall
- May 10
- June 14
- July 12 – Portsmouth Town Hall
- August – No Meeting
- September 13
- October 11
- November 15 – Third Tuesday due to Election Day
- December 13

Revised 30 January, TCA